

Message Text

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - REF: SEOUL 447 VICE 477

EO 11652 NA

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, KS

SUBJ: HIGHLIGHTS OF PRESIDENT PARK'S NEW YEAR'S PRESS

CONFERENCE

REF SEOUL 447

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN PRESS CONFERENCE LASTING MORE THAN
THREE HOURS JAN 18 PRESIDENT PARK APPEALED FOR NATIONAL
CONSENSUS IN SUPPORT OF GOVT EFFORTS TO COPE WITH
NORTH KOREAN CHALLENGE AND ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. HE
EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT NORTH'S SINCERITY IN SOUTH-NORTH
TALKS, BUT PLEDGED EFFORTS TO CONTINUE DIALOGUE. HE
LECTURED STUDENTS ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF STUDY AND DANGERS
OF DEMONSTRATING AND WARNED THAT EFFORTS TO OVERTHROW
GOVT WOULD NOT BE TOLERATED. PARK SAID EMERGENCY MEASURES
WERE DIRECTED AGAINST "IMPURE ELEMENTS" TRYING TO
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OVERTHROW GOVT AND PROMISED THEY WOULD BE REPEALED IF

PUBLIC COOPERATION MADE THEM UNNECESSARY. END SUMMARY

1. PRESIDENT OPENED PRESS CONFERENCE BY THANKING PUBLIC FOR COOPERATION DURING FIRST YEAR OF REVITALIZATION AND APOLOGIZING FOR MISTAKES AND INCONVENIENCES. HE SAID GOVT'S GOAL THIS YEAR IS TO PROMOTE (A) TOTAL NATIONAL CONSENSUS; (B) NATIONAL STRENGTH; (C) DEFENSE AND SECURITY AND (D) ECONOMIC STABILITY, INCLUDING SECURITY FOR LOW INCOME CLASS. HE CITED WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS AND NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATIONS AS JUSTIFYING HIS CALL FOR STRENGTH AND UNITY.

2. PRESIDENT DEALT AT LENGTH WITH NORTH KOREAN CHALLENGE. ASKED ABOUT NORTHWEST ISLANDS HE SAID NORTH'S ACTIONS WERE DELIBERATE VIOLATION OF ARMISTICE AGREEMENT OBVIOUSLY AIMED AT INCREASING TENSION. HE SPECULATED THAT NORTH'S AIM MIGHT BE (A) TO DISTRACT PUBLIC ATTENTION FROM INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES; (B) TO DISRUPT SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE WHICH HAD NOT TURNED OUT AS THEY HOPED; (C) TO MASK NORTH'S PLOTS AGAINST SOUTH; AND (D) TO TEST SOUTH'S REACTION. HE PLEDGED TO DEFEND ISLANDS AND SAID ROKG HAD WARNED NORTH OF ITS DETERMINATION.

3. COMMENTING ON PROSPECTS FOR SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE, PRESIDENT NOTED LACK OF PROGRESS IN COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND DEADLOCK IN RED CROSS TALKS. HE EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT NORTH'S SINCERITY AND DECLARED THAT IF NORTH'S AIM WAS TO OVERTHROW ROK GOVT USING FORCE IN COLLABORATION WITH SO-CALLED "PROGRESSIVE ELEMENTS" IN THE ROK, DIALOGUE WOULD ACHIEVE NOTHING. HOWEVER, HE PLEDGED VIGOROUS EFFORTS TO RESUME THE TALKS AND RESTATED SOUTH'S WILLINGNESS TO REORGANIZE COORDINATING COMMITTEE IF NECESSARY. PRESIDENT CRITICIZED NORTH'S PEACE PACT PROPOSAL AND OFFERED HIS OWN PROPOSAL FOR NON-AGGRESSION AGREEMENT. (SEE REFTEL).

4. ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESIDENT SAID ROK WOULD STRENGTHEN TIES WITH FRIENDLY COUNTRIES WHILE EXPANDING RELATIONS WITH NEUTRAL NATIONS AND BUILDING CONTACTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH COMMUNIST COUNTRIES THROUGH ECONOMIC, SPORTS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES. HE NOTED THAT ROK HAD OPENED FORMAL RELATIONS WITH FIVE NEUTRAL COUNTRIES SINCE HIS JUNE 23 FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT.

5. ASKED TO COMMENT ON "CAMPUS SITUATION," PRESIDENT SPENT FORTY MINUTES REBUTTING STUDENTS' DEMANDS AND URGING STUDENTS TO STICK TO THEIR STUDIES AND NOT TO FOLLOW

THOSE WHO INSTIGATE THEM TO VIOLENCE. PRESIDENT
ACKNOWLEDGED THE JUSTICE OF SOME STUDENT DEMANDS,
BUT SAID THEY HAVE THEIR FACTS WRONG WHEN THEY
SPEAK OF "COMPRADOR CAPITAL" AND "ECONOMIC SLAVERY."
HE EXPLAINED THAT FORMER MEANS FOREIGN CAPITAL MAKES
GREATER PROFITS THAN DOMESTIC AND LATTER MEANS
EXCLUSIVE TRADE WITH ONE COUNTRY NEITHER OF WHICH
IS TRUE OF ROK. PRESIDENT SAID GOVT WOULD NOT
TOLERATE EFFORTS OF "IMPURETLEMENTS" TO INSTIGATE
STUDENT DISORDER. HE CONCLUDED BY COUNSELING STUDENTS
"NOT AS PRESIDENT BUT AS THEIR ELEDER" TO STICK TO STUDIES
AND AVOID SEEKING SIMPLE SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS.
PRESIDENT SMILED AND SPOKE SOFTLY THROUGHOUT HIS
DISCUSSION OF STUDENT PROBLEM, AS IF TO UNDERSCORE HIS
UNDERSTANDING OF YOUTHFUL FOIBLES.

6. COMMENTING ON EMERGENCY MEASURES, PRESIDENT
EXPRESSED REGRET THAT HE WAS FORCED TO BEGIN THE YEAR
WITH STERN ACTION BUT SAID PERSISTENCE OF "IMPURE
ELEMENTS," WHO ATTEMPTING OVERTHROW GOVT UNDER PRETEXT
OF RESTORING DEMOCRACY, LEFT HIM NO CHOICE. HE
REPEATED NEED FOR "SYSTEM OF CONSENSUS" TO COPE WITH
NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATIONS AND WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS. HE
PROMISED TO RESCIND EMERGENCY MEASURES WHEN PUBLIC COOPERATION
MADE THEM UNNECESSARY.

7. ON OTHER SOCIAL PROBLEMS, PRESIDENT WARNED
EMPLOYERS AGAINST DISREGARDING WORKERS' RIGHTS
AND INTERESTS WHILE HE APPEALED TO LABOR TO HELP
BUILD NATIONAL STRENGTH. HE VOICED APPROVAL OF
"SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION" ACHIEVED BY NEW VILLAGE
MOVEMENT IN COUNTRYSIDE AND PROMISED GOVT WOULD RAISE
FARMERS' INCOMES BY INCREASING NEW VILLAGE FACTORIES
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AND EXPANDING FARM MECHANIZATION IN THE FUTURE.

8. SEPTTEL REPORTS PARK'S ECONOMIC COMMENTS.

9. COMMENT: PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWED STANDARD FORMAT
OF BRIEF, PREARRANGED QUESTIONS BY REPORTERS FOLLOWED
BY LENGTHY, PREPARED RESPONSES BY PRESIDENT. SETTING
WAS FORMAL, WITH CABINET AND GOVT PARTY LEADERS PRESENT.

10. WITH EXCEPTION OF PROPOSAL FOR NON-AGGRESSION AGREEMENT,
PRESS CONFERENCE CONTAINED NO SIGNIFICANT POLICY DEPARTURES.
MOST NOTEWORTHY ASPECT WAS PRESIDENT'S RESTRAINED, MODERATE
COMMENTS ON DOMESTIC SITUATION AND EMERGENCY MEASURES.
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